



FAITH CONNECTIONS ON MENTAL ILLNESS

Help & Hope

January 2012

Dear Triangle-Area Public Official:

We are inviting you, as a public official, to attend the Faith Connections on Mental Illness 2nd Annual Conference. Two nationally known experts in the field will headline this full-day event, being held on Friday, March 2, 2012 at St. Thomas More in Chapel Hill, NC. Over 350 persons from across the triangle, including an impressive number of clergy and mental health professionals, registered for last year's sold-out conference, which offers professional credit from Wake AHEC. Costs, registration instructions, and more details on the keynote addresses and break-out sessions are available at the "Annual Conference" link at our website: <http://faithconnectionsmentalillness.org>. All public officials who register, attend, and have notified us in advance, will be individually introduced as part of our program and their name will be posted on our website.

Why should you be interested in this subject?

MENTAL ILLNESS is everywhere . . .

- . . . Headlines stream in local media
- . . . Heartaches scream from our homes
- . . . Our prisons, streets, and homeless shelters overflow

In other words, almost **every single one** of your constituents is touched by the sadness, stigma, lack of emotional and financial support, and barriers to resources engendered by MENTAL ILLNESS.

As NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness - <http://www.nami.org/>) says:

Everybody Knows Somebody©

Faith Connections on Mental Illness

An inter-faith coalition of faith communities dedicated to increasing understanding of mental illness through education, advocacy, and support.

Meeting at St. Thomas More ♦ 940 Carmichael St. ♦ Chapel Hill, NC 27514
(919) 942-9227 ♦ faithconnectmi@aol.com ♦ <http://faithconnectionsmentalillness.org>

This is more than just an individual problem for isolated persons or families – it is a societal problem – and a community problem. As a public official, you are in a unique position to create policy for and influence attitudes and actions toward those affected by mental illness.

Faith Connections on Mental Illness *refuses to bow to the hopelessness* and believes **that ignorance is the biggest barrier of all**. We are an inter-faith coalition of faith communities dedicated to increasing understanding of mental illness through Education, Advocacy, and Support.

We acknowledge that this ignorance abounds in one of the most basic building blocks of our lives – our faith communities. Too often within those walls, chicken soup and prayers are offered for those suffering from broken bones, cancer, and heart attacks – while those with mental illness are ignored, or even shunned.

If you are willing to join us in Chapel Hill on March 2, please register for the conference (and the professional credits if they apply to you) at Wake AHEC. To be listed on our website and recognized at the conference as a supportive public official, after you have registered, please contact Gove or Barbara Elder at 919-967-5403 or gelder5@nc.rr.com.

Sincerely,

Kim McCahan Batson

Communications Liaison & Webmaster
Faith Connections on Mental Illness
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P.S. It is our goal to contact all public officials in the Triangle, especially those elected by the public. As we may have missed someone, please feel free to share news of this event to anyone you wish, especially other official colleagues. While geared toward clergy, their parishioners, and mental health professionals, it is open to all.

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